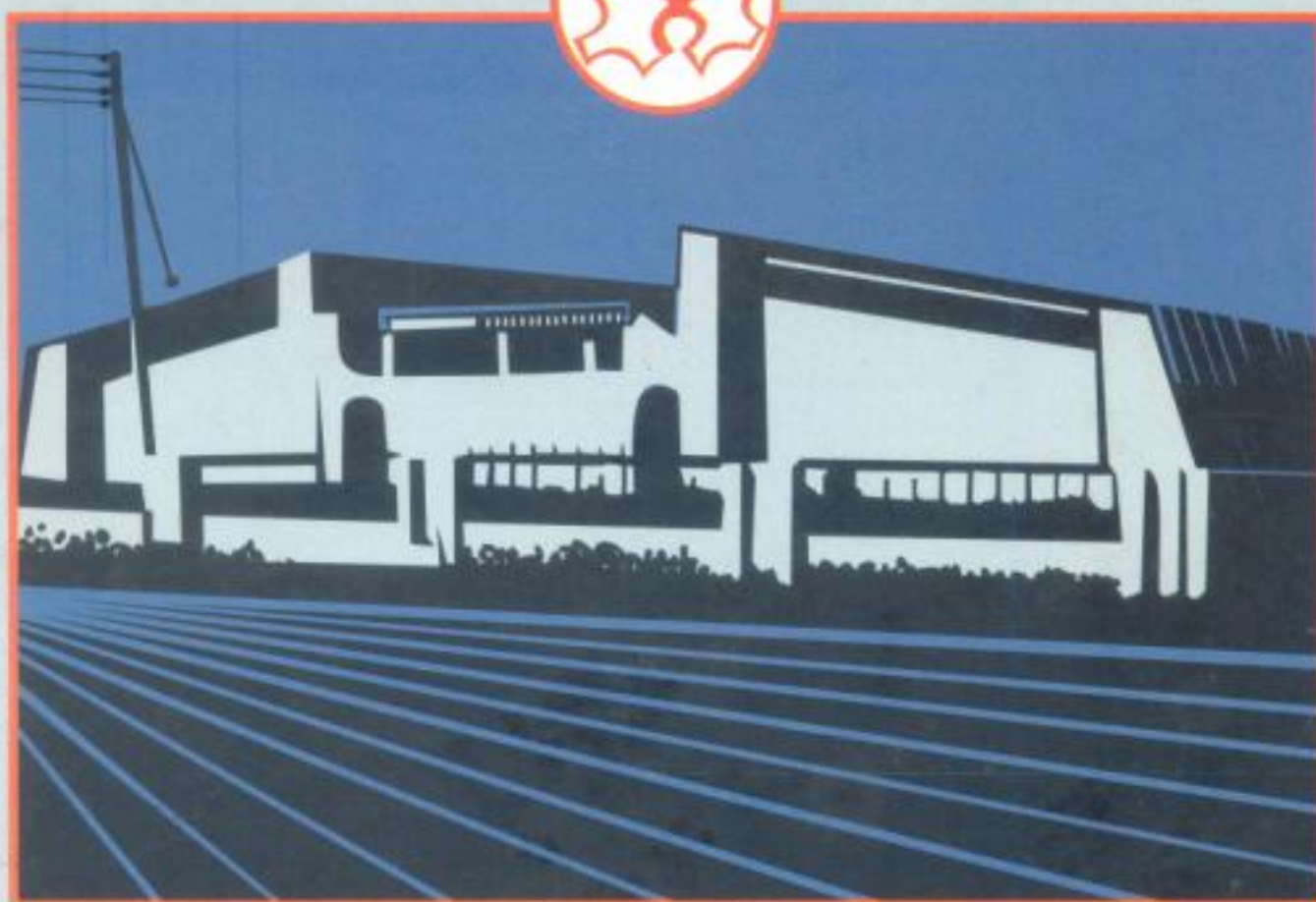


CHILDREN'S Centre



Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building

A Project of the University Women's Association
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Celebrating 25 Years of Service

CHILDREN'S CENTRE

A project of the

**UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

Silver Jubilee Publication

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CHILDREN'S CENTRE

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WHAT IS THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE?

The Children's Centre is a child and youth advocacy project of the University Women's Association (UWA) of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka. It is composed of a library offering children and youth the best in Nigerian and international literature and a wide variety of learning resources; an activity centre providing for skills development in arts, science, drama, creative writing, domestic arts, technology and other areas; and a comprehensive recreational facility.

The Children's Centre aims to respond to the needs of Nigerian children and youth and the realities of modern life by providing:

- Relevant facilities and experiences for growth in a relaxed, warm, but professionally guided atmosphere;
- A place for exploring the wealth of Nigerian culture – its concepts, values, festivals, literature, music, artisan activities and all forms of creative expression;
- A place providing materials for both scientific and technological discovery and exploration of all fields of knowledge;
- A place fostering the development of values, respect for human dignity, and appreciation of the unity and diversity of human experience;
- A place where children can pursue their interests, talents and studies at leisure and build their sense of competence and worth;
- A place where parents receive assistance in the challenging task of bringing up children in our changing society.

Throughout its 25 years of existence the Children's Centre has endeavoured to realize these objectives by providing relevant facilities, activities and programmes for children and youth.

ORIGINS: AN IDEA THAT GREW

The Children's Centre was born out of the desire of women to create better recreational opportunities for their children. In the late 1970's a group of young mothers at the University of Nigeria saw the need to help children develop their full potential by providing a broad range of educational and recreational resources. The initial focus was to encourage voluntary reading by providing pleasurable and relevant children's books. In furtherance of this Virginia (Jill) Dike highlighted picture books for Nigerian children at a meeting of the Nigerian Association of University Women, Nsukka Branch held in 1977. The response of fellow librarians Ogo Amucheazi and Gloria Ofo was that occasional booklists and exhibitions were not enough—only a full library service could meet the needs of children. Shortly afterwards the three formed an informal committee to explore



*Foundation Library Committee – G. Ofo,
V. Dike, O. Amucheazi*

ways of setting up a children's library on the University of Nigeria Nsukka campus. The committee approached the University Women's Association, which enthusiastically adopted the project at its meeting of October 13, 1977.

Throughout the next year the committee made preparations for setting up the library. The Department of Health and Physical Education, under the headship of Kanayo Onyiliogwu, provided a small changing room behind the Gymnasium as the library's temporary premises. Through the good offices of Gloria Ofo, the University Library donated redundant furniture, which was remodeled for children's library use. With donations of ₦200.00 from the University Women's Association (UWA) and ₦100 from the Nigerian Association of Univer-

sity Women (NAUW), the committee prepared the room and acquired books. Committee members searched for titles at a Nigerian Library Association

conference exhibition and bookshops in Enugu. Virginia Dike, Terri Emezi and Aliyya Emeruwa made a special trip to select picture books from the University of Ife Bookshop. Phoebe Ezeilo, a former President and Patron of UWA, added books she had saved from a pre-war UWA children's library. Others were acquired from the market, local donors and publishers in East Africa, England and the United States. By September 1978 the committee informed UWA that preparations were complete and the library was ready for opening.

At a planning meeting of the UWA Executive, under the leadership of President Maria Chukwumah, the name "Children's Centre" was born. Wilhelmina (Willi) Kalu, the Secretary of UWA, espoused a vision of the library as the first component of a full child development and family support facility, an idea she articulated in her speech at the Library Opening Ceremony. She invited parents to join hands in realizing the Centre's objectives by volunteering their time and talents in drama, writing, sewing, carpentry, science, sports, and all aspects of human development. The programme at the opening also brought together the two aspects of the Children's Centre concept, by describing the library's mission as:

- Offering the children of the community quality literature relevant to Nigerian culture; and
- Forming the nucleus of a comprehensive Children's Centre designed to meet the developmental and recreational needs of children.



*Library Opening Ceremony – From L:
C. Ifemesia, V. Dike, W. Kalu, E. Ihekweazu, (R)*

time the Anambra State Library Board began sending book boxes to augment the small collection. The committee expanded to a corps of volunteers who took one hour at the library desk in the morning or evening. Members also met occasionally to process or repair books. The library was entirely run by volunteers in those early years, and up to the present time a committee of volunteers remains the organizing force behind the library.

The Children's Centre Library was opened on October 17, 1978 as part of the state celebration of National Library Week. Dr. C.C. Ifemesia, Chairman of the Anambra State Library Board officially declared the library open and invited guests to view the exhibition of children's books. The inaugural story hour was given by Thelma Obah on Saturday, October 21st. Soon afterwards, the library began opening for borrowing on weekdays and story hour every Saturday. At the same



Inaugural Story Hour with Thelma Obah



Storyhour with Virginia Dike

CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

With the opening of the library, the Children's Centre was poised to participate fully in the International Year of the Child (IYC) in 1979. The IYC Children's Festival--consisting of a book fair, exhibition of creative works, and a talent night--was the Centre's first major event. The Talent Night featured plays, dances and songs from campus groups and primary and secondary schools in the area. The Library Storyhour Group, under the leadership of Thelma Obah assisted by Cynthia Obinabo and U. Agarwal, developed a play for the occasion. Based on the story of the Bremen town musicians, the play, "Making It," also incorporated traditional Nigerian and Indian dances. The performers played to a packed house at the Arts Theatre on May 3, 1979.



Curtain call for "Making It"

The University Women's Association also sponsored an exhibition of children's art, poetry and self-made toys at the Institute of African Studies Gallery from March 26 - 31, 1979. Selected poems from the competition are presented on the next page.

Poems from 1979 IYC Children's Festival Competition

A Wonderful Year, 1979

*A wonderful year, 1979
A year of joy, a year of sorrow
Filled with all types of things
We welcome you first of all to our own
dear selves.*

*The very first day very enjoyable
We wake to see a very bright day
Friends and others play and sing
1979 a year for children like us.*

*We don't know what you have in store for
us
But we hope better things around
Better than the previous years.
We hope you will not disappoint us.
Our hope this year hangs on you
A wonderful year, 1979.*

Margaret Eshett, 11 years

O Loving Little Brother

*O! Loving little brother
Smiling every day
Playing, playing every day.
O sweet brother Onochie
How wonderful to have you
My dear brother.*

May Anumba, 7 years

Thunder Storm at Night

*Rain clouds gathered all together
And flew above the darkened trees.
Bees and spiders crawled to shelter
In their homes among the trees.*

*Children frightened cried in vain
For their parents to hold their hand.
Then came a shower, then came rain
Pouring down on the sandy land.*

*Then came lightning, thunder boomed
It was such a terrible sight
For the small plants that were doomed
In the frightful storm at night.*

Ifeoma Bob-Duru, 11 years

The Stars

*If you look up at the stars,
You will see they are made of fire.
But if you try to fly up there
You will wish to be an angel
But you will wish to have wings.*

Ejim Dike, 7 years

I Wish I Could

*A little kitten has such fun
All through the day;
I wish I could become one when I want to play.*

*A monkey never falls from trees
At any time;
I wish I could become one when I want to climb.*

*A bird can spread its wings and climb
Into the sky;
I wish I could become one when I want to fly.*

*But I'm a child and people say
I must be good;
I can't be these exciting things, I wish I could.
Ijeoma Emeruem, 12 years*

The Fish

*The fish is
A silver string
Dancing in the water.
Patrick Nwoga, 6 years*

PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENT



Children's Centre playground and pavilion, 1980/81

A Playground Committee, originally made up of Willi Kalu, Joan Ezeilo, Terri Emezi, Jo Ezedinma and Virginia Dike, was formed in February 1978. Immediately following its inception, members approached Vice-Chancellor J.O.C. Ezeilo, requesting land for the Children's Centre library and playground. In May 1978, the University gave the Centre a site next to the temporary library premises and playground development began. Funds were raised through a campus-wide appeal by UWA, carolling, and sale of souvenir T-shirts. The project also received the donation of a climbing gym from the Nigerian Association of University Women and a ₦2,000.00 grant from the University. Play equipment included three climbing gyms, swings, a sandbox and tyres. A playground pavilion was constructed with the help of Humphrey Nwosu-Igbo of Works Department, with sculpted panels done by Art students under the supervision of El Anatsui. After a series of contacts undertaken on behalf of the Centre by Dr. Law Madubuinyi, Governor Jim Nwobodo of Anambra State agreed to open the playground and launch the project toward the end of 1980. In anticipation of this event, the Library and Playground Committees merged to form the Children's Centre Committee.



Virginia Dike and Willi Kalu, Secretary and Chairperson of merged Children's Centre Com.

LAUNCHING OF THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE PROJECT



Gov. Jim Nwobodo climbing the playground gym

The year 1980 saw a flurry of activity aimed at developing permanent Children's Centre facilities. The launching of the project took place on December 12, 1980, during the University of Nigeria's 20th Anniversary Convocation Week. As part of the occasion, Anambra State Governor Jim Nwobodo opened the playground and gave ₦16,000.00 for fencing and landscaping. At the same time, Vice-Chancellor Frank Ndili, UWA Patron Edna

Ndili, and Prof. Ogbu Kalu, facilitated contact with two illustrious University alumni, Chief Emmanuel C. Iwuanyanwu and Prince Albert E. Koripamo. After initial contacts by the Alumni Liaison Officer, Chris Uzuegbunam, a delegation of UWA and Children's Centre members visited the men. Chief Iwuanyanwu graciously agreed to build the permanent facility according to a plan donated by Sandor Peri of Cubbitt Architects. On his own



Launching of the Project on December 12, 1980 – from left: Vice Chancellor F.C. Ndili, UWA Patron, E. Ndili, Gov. J. Nwobodo, Chief E.C. Iwuanyanwu

part, Prince Koripamo undertook to equip the Centre, providing ₦10,000.00 for a basic book collection on the spot and delivering a 15-seater Nissan bus in May 1981. Following efforts by Willi Kalu, A.E. Okoroafor, and Humphrey Nwosu-Igbo, the University incorporated the Children's Centre into its master plan, with the present permanent site on Jamie Brooks Road. With these, Children's Centre development began in earnest.

IYY WORKSHOP ON YOUTH AND THE FAMILY, 1985

In 1985 the world celebrated the International Youth Year (IYY). Just as the Children's Centre had celebrated the International Year of the Child in 1979, so it marked the International Youth Year of 1985 with a special event. The IYY Workshop on Youth and the Family was held on June 13-14, 1985 in the Faculty of Engineering Auditorium. The workshop was opened by G.B.I. Onuoha, Director of the Institute of Education and the lead paper was presented by Dr. A.F. Uzoka of the Department of Psychology. The event was conducted in small discussion groups: two for youth, who were drawn from eight schools around Nsukka, and two for adults.

The aim of the workshop was to help parents, teachers and youth explore areas of concern and find ways for youth to achieve maximum participation in and contribution to the society. Topics covered in the area of Youth and Families included youth and changing family dynamics, communication between youth and parents, the changing school system, adolescent sexuality, developing leisure activities for youth, and acculturation in present day Nigeria. The second workshop session took up Youth and Education, looking at the 6-3-3-4 system, career guidance, education of youth with

special needs, youth and authority and desired innovation in education. Conclusions were summarized in a joint closing session, where there was a free and frank exchange of views by youth and adults. Youth participated enthusiastically and expressed opinions freely on moral, social, health, and educational issues. They expressed concern about parental mistrust and lack of time for them and made a strong case concerning their need for healthy recreational facilities.

Additional features included a competition and exhibition of students' art and handwork, an exhibition and demonstration by the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria, a book exhibition, a dance performance by the Arts Education Students Association, and sale of baked goods by students from the Department of Vocational Teacher Education.

Organizers of the workshop included members of the Children's Centre Committee and an IYY Planning Committee made up of Mrs. W.J. Kalu, Dr. A.F. Uzoka, Dr. (Mrs.) C.C. Achebe, Dr. M. Adiele, Dr. J. Amankulor, Miss U. Nzewi, Mr. C. Uzuegbunam, Mrs. P. Okonkwo, Mrs. S. A. Osoagbaka, Dr. (Mrs.) N. Majer, Mrs. D. Erinne, Mrs. O. Nwafor-Orizu, Dr. J.I. Mereni, Mrs. R. Eya, Mr. K. Ejeckam, and Mrs. A. Uwaegbute. The workshop was financed by registration fees, carolling money, and generous donations from Chief D. Umeano, Dr. M. Obayi, Chief Ogbunamiri, Prof. A. U. Ogan, and Dr. M. Adiele.

CHILDREN'S WEEK OF 1989



*Prize-giving by UWA Patron Edem Ikoku – behind,
P. Chineme, Vice-Chancellor Ikoku*

The Children's Week of 1989 marked a decade of Children's Centre activities, coming ten years after the IYC Children's Festival of 1979. It featured a variety of presentations from August 7 – 9, 1989, including essays, poems and songs, book exhibitions, puppet shows, dances, quizzes, film show, drama, neighbourhood group presentations and songs by the Centre Choral group.

The opening ceremony was attended by Vice-Chancellor Chimere Ikoku, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Admin.) Louis Agu, UWA Patron Edem Ikoku, UWA Vice-President Philippa Chineme, parents and children. The week was the initiative of the Centre's first Youth Corper, Pius Udo, who organized a number of other activities such as Reading Club, Farm Club, and Choral Group during the year. Meki Nzewi was the judge for the poems and songs, while Edem Ikoku and Virginia Dike judged the essays. Prize-winning poems, songs and essays were presented and awarded at the opening ceremony. Some of these are included on the next page.



Cultural welcome song



Sunshine Club performing at the Children's Week



Dance group at the Children's Week, 1989

FROM THE CHILDREN

Selections from the Children's Week Competition

How Can Children Make Their Parents Happy?

Children can make their parents be pleased with them in many different ways. Some parents like their children to be dressed up even in the house but especially when going out. So the children should dress up a bit majestically if the dresses are provided by the parents.

On the other hand parents can be surprised. Like me, I like to surprise people by doing things, e.g., when they are out I can fix up their room and everything is in spic and span order, or I can tidy up the study which had cartons scattered about the whole place... After cleaning the place, when my mother comes back she will say "My! Who did this room. Everywhere is sparkling. I had even thought of doing it, but I guessed I hadn't time." And daddy when he comes back will say to my cousin: "Ijeoma should not do the bathroom today, skip her, she did the study mighty well," and to me he will say "keep it up."

You know something, children, when you do something for your parents, you feel good. Then when they give you some sweets or a new outfit for Christmas you will say to yourself, "Oh, good! I really do deserve it."

Another thing children can do for their parents to feel glad is progression.... When children end up in a good occupation, then parents are happy and would say, "Thank God, one person off my hand" or "No other extra head to feed" and "Extra money to feed the rest of the family."

So children I hope you've seen that I have a lot to tell you about making your parents happy. Anyone who doesn't make his parents happy does not love those through whom he came into our beautiful world. But remember that it is said in the big black book the Bible "Honour your father and mother that your days may be long in the land which the Lord giveth thee". This is one of the commandments of the Lord and must be obeyed by all children.

Ijeoma Igboeli, 12 years 1st prize, secondary level

Children can make their parents happy in ways like comforting them. When your parents are not happy you should go by their side and sit with them, talk with them, solve their problems with them. So that they can once more be happy.

Secondly, you can make your parents happy by working with them in the garden or doing some domestic work with them in the house so that they can't be lonely.

I conclude this by saying that children should do certain things with their parents like working with them, learning with them and solving their problems together with them. And children should always obey their parents, in order to avoid making them sad.

Ikenna Uzuegbunam, 12 years, 3rd prize, secondary level

Children are blessings and gifts to their parents from God. They should make their parents feel happy through the following ways.

They are bound to be obedient and hardworking. That is, they should respect and work hard both in school and at home.

Children should play, but not like animals in the forest. They should play gently. They should listen and respect their teachers in the class and elsewhere, so that their parents will be impressed. Children should learn how to love their parents as much as they love themselves. They should talk well of their parents. They are bound to study hard so that they may get a good job to defend this country. This is what children are bound to do to make their parents happy.

Uchechi Ukaegbu, 11 years, 1st prize, primary level

What Children Should Do To Make Nigeria a Better Place

To make Nigeria a better place we should be patriotic. We should stand at attention when the National Anthem is being played. We should caution those who are not disciplined. For example, if we see anybody urinating at the wrong place or shunting in a queue, we should correct the person.

We should respect the National Flag. If the National Flag in our school is torn or dirty, we should make efforts to see that it is replaced or washed clean. If we see anybody selling naira or minting money illegally, we should report such a person to the police. We should try to check armed robbery and report the cases of suspects to the police. We should try to be self-reliant. We should also try to manufacture things by ourselves using local materials.

Also we should do a lot of farm work, plant economic trees, keep the surroundings clean and obey the rules of the nation. In these ways we would help to make Nigeria a better place to live in.

Chioma Nwadinigwe, 11 years 1st prize, primary level

SONG –

We Are Happy To Shout Hurrah

*On top of mountain and hilltop
We gladly and merrily sing,
We children of Children's Centre Library
Are happy to shout Hurrah.*

*Hula la la la sing Hurrah
Here on the hilltop we have a lot of fun
Hurrah, that's a happy song.*

*We have a lot of fun when we read
From Children's Centre Library.
Oh, we still happy shout and sing
Hurrah, Hurrah always.*

*Emmanuel Obanu, Grade 5B
1st prize song, primary level*



*University Staff School Band at the
Handover Ceremony*

POEM -

Shelter for the Homeless

*They are a wandering camp.
Not sure of a place to sleep.
They wander from place to place.
In cold, heat and rain.
Under trees and leaves they sleep
at night
Not sure to see tomorrow's light.
But still they wander.
Moving on yonder
In all kinds of weather
No matter what danger.
Joy comes not when it is night
For sleeping is no pleasure too
And dawn a moving time again.
The streets shine
The flowers blossom
But not to the joy of the homeless.*

*Nduka Nnoli, 12 years
1st prize poem, secondary level*



*UWA Sec. Rose Chukwukere addressing the crowd
L – DVC Louis Agu; R – Patron Edem Ikoku*

DONATION OF MADAM HULDER IWUANYANWU BUILDING



*Chief Iwuanyanwu handing the building over to Vice Chancellor Ikoku.
UWA President Maria Chukwumah and the crowd applaud.*

The building pledged by Chief (Dr.) E.C. Iwuanyanwu was handed over to Vice-Chancellor Chimere Ikoku on November 29, 1986, during the University's Silver Jubilee. The event took place on Alumni Day of the Silver Jubilee celebration, since Chief Iwuanyanwu's donation was part of the Alumni contribution to the University of Nigeria endowment fund. That evening the Children's Centre Theatre performed

Mushrooms in the Desert by Esiaba Irobi and *Vulture! Vulture!* by Efua Sutherland for Alumni and other Convocation guests.

The naming ceremony of the Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building took place on January 31, 1992. The building is named in honour of the donor's mother, whose concern for children and life of service to others gave eloquent expression to the ideals of the Children's Centre. On the occasion Chief Iwuanyanwu reaffirmed his commitment to the Centre and donated ₦100,000.00 toward a trust fund for its full development and maintenance. In 2003 Chief Iwuanyanwu contributed an additional ₦375,000.00 for building maintenance and landscaping in preparation for the Silver Jubilee.



Mrs. Eudora Iwuanyanwu cuts the tape to open the building.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

CHRISTMAS CAROLLING

In 1977, even before the opening of the library, a handful of women felt the need to get into the Christmas spirit and went out carolling one cold December night. To their utmost surprise, people responded by giving them money, a total of ₦35.00. Wondering what to do with money generated by the Christmas spirit, the women decided to buy



Carollers led by Chiazio Igboeli, Kodili Ezeike and Mary Ellen Chijioko, 1985

books for the proposed children's library. Thus began the tradition of Christmas carolling on behalf of the Children's Centre, a tradition that has lasted up to the present.

At first members of UWA and the Children's Centre all went in one group, devoting a night to each of four zones—two up-campus in the Margaret Cartwright area and two down-campus in the Odum and Murtala Mohamed areas. In order to share more of the musical heritage of Christmas with children,

the committee developed a booklet of carols from diverse traditions. By 1986 it was felt that it was too much for one group to try to cover the entire campus. As a result the carollers divided into zones. With passing time the carolling came to depend more on the children, led by a few women or young adults. The Christmas carolling tradition has continued through difficult times and in spite of obstacles such as paucity of volunteers to lead it, nonpayment of salaries, and knockout-wielding troublemakers. It is still the major fundraising activity of the Children's Centre. From ₦35.00 in 1977 to over ₦63,000.00 in 2003, carolling donations have bought books and other resources, furniture, and equipment to develop Centre programmes and services. Carolling has also provided joy to carollers and members of the community and the excitement of an outing to the children.

CHILDREN'S CENTRE LIBRARY

The library has been central to the Children's Centre from its founding in 1978 to the present. For over eight years after the opening, the library operated from a small room measuring 10 x 14 feet. These quarters were quite cramped, since library membership had increased to 284 by the end of the first year. Children would line up outside and enter the library 10 at a time to borrow books. Storyhour took place in the library or the playground pavilion. The library workroom was in the Chijiokes' boys quarters. It was an exciting



Mary Ellen Chijioke guiding users in the old library, 1985

university students, researchers and parents use the library for reference and research purposes. The library also extends its services beyond the immediate community through outreach to schools and the prison.

Library Resources

The library originated out of the desire to provide rich and varied reading materials for Nigerian children. Guidelines for Library Collection Development were adopted in 1982 and revised in 2003. From the beginning the library has applied the twin criteria of quality and relevance. In line with this the library seeks to provide a comprehensive collection of Nigerian children's books and a selection of the best books from other lands. The library also aims for a balanced collection, catering for the needs of children and youth from three to eighteen years and covering all areas of human experience.

Systematic collection development began with the ₦10,000 basic book grant given by Albert E. Koripamo in 1981. The committee embarked on a series of book-buying trips between 1982 and 1987, attending book fairs in Ife and Enugu and bookshops in Benin and Ibadan. Members travelling or attending conferences would try to pick up good books wherever they went. In addition, contacts for donations or exchanges were made with libraries, associations and other agencies abroad. By the time the library moved to the Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building, the collection was over 5,000. Since that time, accessioned books have increased to almost 15,000. The library also has magazines, journals, pictures and maps, toys, and indoor games such as ncholakoto, scrabble and

day when on May 28, 1987 the library opened in the Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building. This beautiful and spacious facility allowed continuing expansion of library resources and services.

The library is kept open by university staff, NYSC members, and volunteers like Sylvia Uhiara, long known for her Friday evening service. Membership is open to children and youth from 3 to 18 years. Over 4,000 children have benefited from library services as members. A number of



Ebele Maduewesi at the circulation desk, 1985



New library in Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building, 2000

chess. There is need to expand these nonbook resources and introduce information technology.

The Children's Centre Library has a research collection of African children's literature for use by scholars. This collection aims to provide a comprehensive collection of Nigerian children's literature and a selection of literature from other African countries for research purposes. The African Children's Literature Research Collection is included

in an international directory of children's literature documentation centres put out by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

The library spends a considerable proportion of its funds on collection development and continues to benefit from donations by friends at home and abroad. Yet, with ever increasing aspirations, there is always need for more. This is especially true as the library reaches out to the larger community, seeking to extend library services to more children.

Relationship with Department of Library and Information Science

Organization was simple in the early years, when the library was strictly a voluntary affair. At first, books were organized into ten major areas by colour code. In 1983 Mary Ellen Chijioke applied her professional skills to cataloguing the collection using the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. She also contributed her personal set of cataloguing tools and a typewriter for this purpose. As the young Department of Library Science (now Library and Information Science) developed, students were brought in to help catalogue and process the books as part of their practicals. The relationship between the Children's Centre Library and the Department began in 1985/86 and was informal at first. However, in 1988 Vice-Chancellor Chimere Ikoku approved a formal relationship, proposed by UWA President Ebele Maduewesi and Acting Head of Library Science Virginia Dike, whereby the library serves as a teaching laboratory for the department, which in turn provides professional and administrative assistance to the library. As part of this assistance, the University posted two staff--a cleaner and a typist--to the new library building in 1988, and the first of a series of Youth Corpers arrived the same year. Later, the position of Librarian was established to maintain the teaching laboratory. Library and Information Science staff and students maintain the library, while benefiting from its

facilities in teaching and learning. The relationship between the Library and the Department of Library and Information Science continues to work to the great mutual benefit of both parties.

Library Activities

Storyhour

Saturday storyhour was the library's first activity and continues to be very popular. It is both pleasurable and educational, attracting children to books and reading and extending their knowledge of the world and themselves. Storyhour is a lively, joyous time, filled with stories, conversation, poems, clapping, singing and exclamations of delight. The primary storytellers over the years have been Children's Centre Committee members and other women of the community. Library and Information



Library Science students doing practicals, 1985



Storyhour with Nneka Onwubiko and Fidelia Asiegbo, September 2003

Science students, Youth Corps members, youth volunteers, and members of the international student organization AIESEC have also played a role in conducting storyhours.

Many themes have been taken up during storyhour—family relationships, Christmas, animals, wind and rain, trains, the five senses, care of the environment. “Stories around the world”, a series in 1996, introduced children to life in Ghana, East Africa, Italy, the United States, Caribbean islands, Middle East, and China. The series used a large world map and pleasurable stories, songs, and visual materials to broaden children’s awareness of the world and its peoples. Puppet theatre has been a popular feature of storyhours for younger children.

Garfield Reading Club

In August 1995 Ada Udechukwu introduced the Garfield Reading Club at the Children’s Centre Library. The aims were to provide children with incentives to read for fun and knowledge and make them more aware of the totality of books available in the library. It was adapted from a programme of the American Library Association and made use of its materials. Every Tuesday in August, thirty-one children met for in-house reading, creative activities and discussion. Each week focused on a different theme—folktales, poetry, fiction, biographies and nonfiction. The children created pictorial book reports and original stories, kept account of the books they read in their “Garfield cat-a-logs”, added copies of short stories and poetry to their reading club files, and rounded up their club activities with a “Garfield Party.”

The Library Corps

The crowd at the library can be quite overwhelming, especially during vacation periods and on Saturdays. Many young children also need guidance on library behaviour and the proper care of books and other materials. Into the breach has come the Library Corps, a group of dedicated secondary school and university students who help at the circulation desk, guide children in playing chess or using other resources, ensure careful handling of books, and help process library materials.

Outreach to the Community

As its facilities expanded, the Children’s Centre Library began seeking ways to extend its services beyond the university community. In particular, the library began reaching out to schools in the vicinity. This began in 1989 with a reading promotion project in six public primary schools around Nsukka. Led by Virginia Dike, students of the Department of Library Science conducted storyhours and book sharing sessions, while the CCL provided resources and transport. This activity has continued over the years, with the bus also bringing groups of school children on library visits.

During one such visit, children from Union Primary Schools I and II created a big book of African animals. In addition, the CCL provides portable library services to schools which join as institutional members. More recently, the library has added projects aimed at developing learning and information skills, using local community resources as well as conventional library materials. This has taken the



Storyhour with pupils of Central School II, Nsukka, 1990

form of taping the children's rendering of animal tales at Nguru in 1997 and producing big books on birds and occupations at seven participating schools in 2003. Reading promotion and information literacy were also the goals of projects undertaken with the University of Nigeria Secondary School.

The Children's Centre Library has also reached out through participation in workshops for teacher/librarians and primary and nursery school personnel. It has hosted refresher courses of the Anambra State School Libraries Association on the themes of learning skills and literature and the schoolchild. In the year 2000 the Library hosted the annual conference of the Nigerian School Library Association on the theme of library services for the Universal Basic Education programme. It has also mounted exhibitions and lectures on Nigerian children's literature for groups of international students and other visitors. In all these ways the library renders services to the wider community.

LONG VACATION AND CLUB ACTIVITIES

The Long Vacation Programme and other year round club activities are central to the Children's Centre concept. The guiding philosophy sees education as a broad and multi-faceted concept, involving much more than schooling or cognitive learning. Education should relate to all aspects of life and lead to realization of one's full potential. From the beginning the library was seen as part of a comprehensive facility fostering the full and well-rounded development of children and youth. Long vacation activities not only give pleasure, but expand children's horizons and enrich their experience. The vacation period, rather than representing time to be occupied, offers a unique opportunity for growth, the gaining of skills, and exploration of areas not adequately covered in school. Through a



Albert E. Koripamo

variety of carefully planned activities, vacation can fulfill its promise as a period offering children unique opportunities for growth and development.

The Long Vacation Programme began in a small way in 1981, with a series of excursions made possible by the delivery of the 15-seater Nissan bus by Albert E. Koripamo. From 1984 more extensive programmes were organized, with 5 activities in 1984, 9 activities in 1985, and 12 activities in 1986. These were some of the most successful programmes, with a wide range of activities—from excursions, cookery, and fun with facts and figures, to art, caring for others, sewing and soccer. There was broad participation by the mothers and fathers of the community. And this success was recorded in spite of the fact that the Children's Centre

had no proper home: activities met in homes, classrooms and out of doors. The 1987 long vacation programme had the distinction of being the first in the new building. From 1988 to 1991 the programme moved to the December holiday period, as a result of the new school calendar, which put the long vacation at the end of the year. By 1992, however, the schedule was back to normal, and full programmes were mounted through most of the 1990s. Increasingly, Youth Corpers played a key role in running the vacation activities. Special mention must be made of Seyi Salami and Meg Fadehan, who organized an outstanding programme and cultural show in the midst of the political uncertainty of 1993. Staff children have not been left out: in 2000 university students, many of whom were graduates of Children's Centre programmes, took over many vacation activities, even running the library during a staff strike. Among them are Patsy Kalu, Obinna Anyanwu, Lenu Fakae, Kana Ogban-Iyam, Chesa Okereke, Chinweze Dike, Nkemjika Iwundu, Chuka Iwundu, Nwanne Okereke, Chinyere Anyakoha, Udi Ijeomanta and Obioma Erojikwe.

Below is a portrait of the many activities offered by the Children's Centre.

Excursions

This ever-popular vacation activity helps extend the experience of children and gives them the excitement of seeing new things. Excursions can begin close to home, with visits to the zoo, vet farm, archaeology museum, or computing centre. Older children often visited departments like the University Library, Geology, Botany, or Agricultural Engineering.

With the bus, excursions could be extended to the town—the fire station, post office, telephone exchange, bakery. Trips were also made to more distant places—Orba market, the ironworks at Lejja, an aluminum factory, cashew plantation, Ada rice, the Coca-cola

bottling company. On occasion children went as far as Enugu to visit the airport, a coalmine, and the House of Assembly. Whether near or far, excursions offer the excitement of an outing and are a most popular vacation activity.



Junior Excursions with Maria Nwaegbe and Nancy Achebe, 1987



Junior day camp excursion to Orba Market, 1985

**Excursion
Organizers**

Wilhelmina Kalu
 Virginia Dike
 Kodili Ezeike
 Peris Maduka
 Ogo Amucheazi
 Philippa Chineme
 Maria Nwaegbe
 Nancy Achebe
 Janet Ndukwe
 Joann Ezeilo
 Seyi Salami
 Meg Fadehan
 Jo Okereke
 Jo Alumanah
 Sunday Emene
 Nkadi Onyegegbu
 Funke Adeyemi
 Fidelia Asiegbu

Junior Activities

Activities for children 5 – 8 years were introduced in 1985 with a Junior Day Camp, which met three times a week on the Chijioke's front porch. Children learned through a variety of activities, such as stories, drawing and games. They explored other lands—Tanzania, Ghana, Japan, Italy, the Caribbean—through slides and stories, and their own environment through excursions. Junior activities have continued to be

popular, offering a similar combination of storytelling, puppetry, crafts and games. In 1992 the Children's Centre developed a playroom where these activities often take place.



Junior activities with Grace Anyanwu, 1987



Junior group performing at the long vacation show, 1995

*Junior Activities –
Mary Ellen Chijioke
Virginia Dike
Grace Anyanwu
Philippa Chineme
Nancy Achebe
Festus Ikoh
Willi Kalu
Nkadi Onyegegbu
Meg Fadehan
Toyin Oyelade
Kana Ogban-Iyam
Terri Emezi
Chinweze Dike
Patsy Kalu*

Youth Forum

The Children's Centre concept has always included services to the youth of the community. In 1984, Willi Kalu introduced a Teenage Forum to give young people the opportunity to discuss areas of concern. This was the take-off point for the IYY Workshop on Youth and the Family. Activities have included health talks, discussions of psychological and socio-cultural issues, a cook-out at the Archaeological Village. When the University Forum was introduced in 1989, the University Women's Association served as mothers for the Youth Forum and Senior Youth Forum (Thatch Hut).

Organizers – Willi Kalu, Mary Ellen Chijioke, Theresa Ikeme, Terri Emezi, Chiazio Igboeli, Grace Anyanwu, Jo Alumanah

More recently, UWA has extended its work with university students, conducting an orientation for fresh students on the initiative of UWA Patron Nkechi Mbanefoh. On June 5, 2002, UWA, under the leadership of President Nwanneka Nwala, organized a forum on prostitution with the international student group, AIESEC.

The Children's Centre continues to be concerned over the lack of healthy recreational opportunities for youth. A dream yet to be fulfilled is the creation of a youth clubhouse as a recreational centre where adolescents can socialize, have snacks, listen to music, and play table tennis or chess.

Art Classes

Art helps children develop in imagination, creativity and self-expression. Vacation



Senior art class making marionettes with Sue Ubagu, 1986

Organizers for Art class

*Mary Ellen Chijioke
Nancy Ohuche
S. Patel
Sue Ubagu
Elisabeth Odenigbo
Janet Ndukwe
Emeka Amaefunah
Ada Udechukwu
Grace Anyanwu
Toyin Oyelade
Henry Olawale
Simon Nwoko
Udi Idika*

programmes have featured art activities for both juniors and seniors. Children have learned to create hand puppets and marionettes, fabric and paper collage, tie-dye, batik, papier mache, macrame, quilts, prints, and gifts. The 1985 art programme ended with an exhibition in the Faculty of Education Harden Building, during which participants explained the techniques employed to parents and juniors. Artwork has often been displayed as part of the end-of-programme show. The 1988 Senior Art Class with Emeka Amaefunah created a three-dimensional display showing life in Nigeria for an



*Junior art activities with
Grace Anyanwu, 1987*

exchange programme with the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, USA. (See p.43). In 1994 Youth Corper Henry Olawale led children in making a model of the Children's Centre. Arts and crafts have also been part of junior activities.

Cookery

Cookery classes were a very popular activity in the mid-1980s. Then the activity took place in the instructors' homes, with the class rotating in small groups. Attention was divided between baking and Nigerian and international cooking. The classes were able to

*Cookery
Coordinators*
Elisabeth Odenigbo
Virginia Dike
Mary Ellen Chijioka
Maria Nwaegbe
Willi Kalu
Grace Anyanwu



Senior cookery class making chin chin, 1985

take advantage of the diversity of the university community in learning to prepare Nigerian, Kenyan, Jamaican, Indian, Polish, Irish and French dishes. The 1986 programme produced a recipe book, which has been expanded and reprinted for the 25th Anniversary. Baking for Juniors, which took place in the Odenigbo's garage, taught young children how to prepare simple cakes, breads, chin chin and cookies. Cookery classes moved to the Children's Centre, where they continue to be very popular, after the kitchen was partially equipped in 1993.

Science and Life Skills

A number of Children's Centre activities have focused on science and practical skills for everyday life. Vacation activities such as Let's Find Out (1985) and Learning Skills (1988) focused on learning how to learn. Fun with Facts and Figures (1985) encouraged young children to enjoy science through games and simple experiments. Older children acquired science education through films, experiments and visits to laboratories. Other activities emphasized practical skills such as repairing an electric plug or bicycle tyre.



Car maintenance with Kalu Maduka, 1986

Science & Life Skills

*Elisabeth Odenigbo
Gladys Agusiegbe
Lesley Onuora
Peris Maduka
Maria Nwaegbe
Mary Ellen Chijioke
Ebele Maduewesi
Nancy Achebe
Julie Okpala*

*Pius Udo
Judy Osuala
Willi Kalu
Kalu Maduka
E.S. Iwuamadi
C.C. Agwu
Dike Ogu
A.K. Achinivu
C. Nwosu*

Specific areas of interest have been health education and first aid, car maintenance, farming, safety, and computer skills. A fully equipped laboratory in the Children's Centre would facilitate acquisition of the requisite science and computer skills needed in today's world.

Sewing Classes

Sewing was introduced by Philippa Chineme, assisted by Judy Osuala and Maria Nwaegbe, in 1986 and taught under the direction of Sylvia Uhiara in 1988, Edem Ikoku in 1992, and Maria Nwaegbe in 1997. Participants learned how to cut out and sew simple dresses and two-piece outfits. They also acquired skills in knitting and needlework.



Sewing with Philippa Chineme and Judy Osuala, 1986

Children's Centre Theatre

This was introduced in 1985 and culminated in the performance of *Mushrooms in the Desert* by Esiaba Irobi and *Vulture! Vulture!* by Efua Sutherland, directed by Willi Kalu and Esiaba Irobi. It took place during Alumni Day of the University's 25th Anniversary



Mushrooms in the Desert



Vulture! Vulture!

Convocation Week in November, 1986, followed by a command performance in January, 1987. This has been followed by a number of other theatrical performances developed during vacation programme creative activities.

Theatre: O. Enekwe, J. Amanulor, Bessie Umeh, Willi Kalu, Esiaba Irobi, V. Onuba

Creative Club

Plays, dances, poetry and prose were activities in the Senior Creative Club initiated by the Youth Corpers in 1993. These were presented in the long vacation show of that year. The De Vasco Club of the same year explored the diversity of Nigerian culture, especially the Yoruba culture shared by the two corpers. In a similar vein, the Creative Club of subsequent years prepared dramatic works, dances, and songs, including the Children's Centre Anthem.



Dance group at long vacation show, 1993

Creative writing took up stories, poems, and essays on such themes as "My ideal family."



Drama "The Unbelieving Christian", 1995

Creative Club

*Pius Udo
Seyi Salami
Meg Fadehan
Henry Olawale
Toyin Oyelade
Cosmos Okpalaebube
Vicky Onu
Uche Enekwe
Ada Udechukwu*

Sports and Games

Sports were included in the vacation programme as early as 1984, with instruction in yoga, gymnastics and ball games. Junior Soccer League was introduced in 1985 and Kung Fu became a regular feature from 1988. The Centre offered table tennis, badminton and basketball in the early 1990s. In 2001, Emeka Owo organized a chess club for the children. A recurring theme has been the need to develop playing fields and playground



Playground activities with Grace Anku, 1992

Sports & Games

*Carmel Emeruwa
Peter Ekpendu
Miss Irulo
Mark Chijioke
Obi Odenigbo
Atuegwu Nzewi
Sunday Emene
Mr. Abadua
Chesa Okereke
Chinweze Dike
Kana Ogban-Iyam
Lenu Fakae
Emeka Owo
Chris Nwosu*

equipment for full utilization of sports. This would include outdoor play equipment, playing fields, basketball and tennis courts, and a bicycle path.

Caring for Others

This programme of visits to the Motherless Babies Home was introduced to encourage social awareness and concern for others. The visits began in 1986 as a long



Caring for Others

*Willi Kalu
Elisabeth Odenigbo
Eva Kammler
Judy Osuala
Chiazo Igboeli
Peris Maduka
Philippa Chineme
Virginia Dike
Jo Alumanah
Nkadi Onyegegbu
Jo Okereke
Helen Ama
Comfort Ogban-Iyam
Funke Adeyemi
Udi Ijomanta
Lawretta Akaeze*

vacation activity and have continued through the years, sometimes during the vacation programme and sometimes as a year round activity. Children visit the Home to care for the babies, holding them and playing with them. The response of the babies was so great that the visits expanded into the Motherless Babies Project, described in a later section.

Ecumenical Religious Activities Programme (ERAP)

ERAP met as a Children's Centre club activity between 1983 and 1985. Led by Willi Kalu, Mary Ellen Chijioke, Virginia Dike and Peris Maduka, children came together on Sunday afternoons to consider religious questions and concerns. Among the areas explored were personal values and identity, human beings in creation, the ministry of Jesus, the meaning of Christmas and Easter, and religious faith as the basis for social action.

Conservation Club

The Youth Conservation Club, made up of students from the primary and secondary staff schools under the leadership of Julie Okpala, assisted by Carol Esedebe and G. Moronu, was initiated in the 1993/94 session. The club celebrated World Environmental Day on June 5, 1994 with a workshop held at the Children's Centre. Club members also undertook a refuse disposal and recycling project whereby containers for sorting waste were distributed to participating households and collected weekly for compost, recycling or disposal.



Julie Okpala introducing Earth Day, 1994

The environment has received more recent attention from UWA due to the interest of Patron Nkechi Mbanefoh. The landscaping of the Centre in preparation for the 25th Anniversary is a continuation of this concern.

Film Matinee Show

In 1988, an afternoon Film Show Matinee was added to Saturday activities. Christoph Ludzuweit provided the projector, technical assistance and many of the films for this programme, with coordination assistance from Nancy Achebe and Willi Kalu.

Programmes for Women

The University Women's Association has held a number of programmes for women at the Children's Centre, beginning with Educate Women for Development in 1988. Speakers have included Comfort Chikwendu on breast and cervical cancer, Ada



Educate women for development, 1988

Uwaegbute on keeping healthy and young, Joe Mbagwu and Raymond Anyadike on protecting the environment and saving our lives, Peter Uzoegwu on sickle cell anemia, Elizabeth Kafaru on medicinal herbs, Mrs. Akamigbo on preparing for retirement, and Miriam Ikejiani-Clark on being a woman in the world of politics. The most recent programme was a talk show in December, 2002, with the Honourable Commissioner for

Women's Affairs in Ebonyi State, Ugo Nnachi, speaking on women in leadership positions, and a second talk by R. U. Okafor on growing old gracefully.

The Children's Centre has also hosted joint workshops on conflict resolution, with Yemi Sinuoye and Academic Associates, and on family life skills, with Chi Obayi of the Africa-Population Project and with Planned Parenthood.

MOTHERLESS BABIES PROJECT

Nsukka has a Motherless Babies Home run by the National Council of Women Societies. It is situated in a small bungalow up on Government Hill. In 1986 a group led by Willi Kalu, Elisabeth Odenigbo and Peris Maduka began visiting the home as part of the vacation activity Caring for Others. The women saw this as a way of encouraging children to reach out and empathize with less fortunate children. What they found led to an enduring activity and the larger Motherless Babies Project.

The first visit was an unforgettable experience. The babies lay listless in their cots, many of them facing the wall. Although some were as old as two years, they didn't walk and they didn't talk. Nor did they smile. They just lay there. Some of them cried and pulled away when the women and children tried to pick them up. However, once they got used to being held, they did not want to let go; they cried and resisted when the children tried to put them down.



Peris Maduka with the babies, Christmas party, 1986

The women noted that while the babies' basic physical needs were being met, the overworked staff of the Home did not give much individual attention. The babies' response made it very clear that physical, mental and emotional development are interwoven, and that any disturbance in one area will have negative effects on other areas. Even during the initial visits the babies seemed to benefit from the increased personal contact and attention the children could give them. Thus began the Motherless Babies Project.

The visits continued, not only during the Long Vacation Programme, but throughout the year. A busload of children would go to the Home on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons. Once there they would change and feed the babies, and more important, hold and play with them, sing and talk to them. Each child adopted one baby for special attention. They brought gifts of clothes, food, and toys, and celebrated Christmas and

Independence Day with parties at the Home. But they discovered that individual attention and love were the babies' greatest needs.

With only two caretakers for about 12 infants, the need was seen to be so great that the Children's Centre put out a special appeal for funds to hire additional staff. From 1988 to 1994 the Project employed two caretakers with specific responsibility for direct care of the babies. Regular supplies of milk, eggs, crayfish and fruit were given to supplement the babies' food. The Project also provided basic equipment such as mattresses and beddings and lobbied for provision of other amenities.

Once babies are walking well, they are discharged and return to their fathers or other family members. Problems soon after discharge led the women to embark on follow-up visits to monitor the babies' progress during the transitional period from institutional to home care. The Project also linked up with the Social Work students of the Department of Sociology/Anthropology, who visited the Home and carried out follow-up visits to discharged babies as part of their fieldwork experience. In addition to Committee members, the contributions of Eva Kammler to the success of this project merit special mention.

Visits to the Motherless Babies Home are still a regular part of Children's Centre activities and still help meet the needs of both the babies and the children.

Donors to Motherless Babies Project

*Eva Kammler
Gabry Steinbock
Elisabeth Odenigbo
Willi Kalu family
Katrine Wyseure
Colgate U. students
Rachel Watanabe-Batten
Uzuegbunam family
Edith Ihekweazu
Kate Iwu
Rose Chukwukere
Nkechi Ene-Obong
Chiazo Igboeli
Ify Enwezor
Peris Maduka
Nwosu-Igbo children
Ogo Amucheazi
Lesley Onuora
Beryl Kamulu
Joann Weisell
Emehelu family
Julie Okpala
Jo Alumanah
Ije and Nkem Dike
Ako Chijioko*

PRISON LIBRARY

In March 2000 the Children's Centre began library service to the Nigerian Prison Service, Nsukka. This followed a visit to the prison by the UWA Patron Nkechi Mbanefoh, UWA President Uche Agwagah, and members of the UWA Executive. While interacting with the prisoners and staff, Virginia Dike of the Library Committee had the idea of extending the portable library service already available to schools to the prison. Most of the 280 inmates are young men awaiting trial, many of them school dropouts who can be classified as youth. Accordingly, the Children's Centre delivered a portable library containing over 100 books and magazines as a revolving collection. The first two years the library was operated by the Committee and for short periods by two Library and Information Science students doing their final year projects and by Lawretta Akaeze and other Youth Corpers assigned to the Children's Centre. The library was first located in the prison chapel and later in a small office, and it opened at most two mornings a week.

The prison library outreach made significant gains in its third year of operation. The new head of Nsukka Prison, Theodore Ndukwu, allocated a small one-room building for

the library. The room was renovated and equipped through anonymous donations from Children's Centre Committee members. Mr. Ndukwu also solved the problem of personnel by assigning a newly posted young warder to the library full-time.



From L – ACP T. Ndukwu, Library Warder E. Eziyi, Welfare Officer L. Ekeanyanwu and Virginia Dike examining the borrowers' register.



Readers in the Nsukka Prison Library, 2003

seen by the prisoners' comments.

The inmates have enthusiastically embraced the service, which relieves boredom, engages their minds, enriches their outlook, and affords opportunities for self-improvement. They also value the interaction with the library personnel. Analysis of circulation statistics over a two-year period reveals a wide range of reading interests. Magazines are especially popular, including news magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, general knowledge magazines such as *National Geographic*, and devotional literature (*The Word Among Us*, *Every Day with Jesus*, *Decision*). Colourfully illustrated and simply written information books are another popular choice for recreational reading. Novels are popular with more able readers. Textbooks are very much in demand, as many prisoners wish to further their education. This service offers wonderful opportunities to make a difference in someone's life, as can be

What the Library Means to Prisoners

Library is very good because it teaches us a lot of things in our life so far. So I love the library.

The library helps me in refreshing my memory.

Since I got myself in prison I have been laying down thinking how I managed to be here, but when it is time for that, I will come to bring a book to make me have something doing, so from that I start thinking of something to be in future.

It has alleviated my suffering at least for a while.

The library has done great things – some of us can now read and write and can make a very nice speech in public.

It gives me more religious knowledge and understanding.

The library has helped me a lot in knowing what is happening outside this yard and beyond our nation Nigeria.

The library is good to me because it made me to grow well in my study. It gives me joy whenever I come to the library to read a book.

Library has done a lot to the life of inmates. Keep it up. Please and please don't lose hope for your reward will come from God. Amen.

PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICES

The Psycho-Educational Testing Services form part of the comprehensive child development services of the Children's Centre. The facility is a community service and a teaching laboratory for special education, in a linkage approved by the Dean, Faculty of Education and the Head, Department of Educational Foundations. This new facility, initiated in 2000, is the brainchild of Wilhelmina Kalu, a psychologist in the Department of Educational Foundations and longtime Chairperson of the Children's Centre Committee, who also donated the initial collection. It is intended to answer the long-felt need for services to children and youth with special needs. It provides testing and counselling services for children with learning disabilities, the gifted, the mentally retarded, and those with other special needs. Previously children with special needs have lacked access to any diagnostic, correctional or guidance services within the community. The testing services occupy the clubroom wing of the building. One room serves as the conference room and library, while the other doubles as playroom and laboratory for this facility and the Children's Centre as a whole.

The Psycho-Educational Testing Service was launched with a familiarization workshop held for members of the Children's Centre Committee and UWA Executive

from July 2-4, 2002. The two resource persons for the workshop were Wilhelmina Kalu and Victoria Onu, both members of the Special Education Unit and Children's Centre Committee. The aims of the workshop were to familiarize and sensitize participants with information on special children, their potentials and the resources available in the facility for assisting such



children. It also aimed to give participants basic knowledge in identification and intervention as well as programme development for several categories of special needs persons. The workshop provided basic information which could be shared with parents and teachers for preventive practices or referrals to the Centre for help. The Service is due to take off with testing and counselling services before the end of the Silver Jubilee year.

CHILDREN'S CENTRE NEWSLETTER and Other Publications

The first Children's Centre Newsletter came out in November 1986, on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building during the University of Nigeria's Silver Jubilee. Newsletter #10 came out in December 2003. The Newsletters feature Children's Centre activities and programmes, library news, book reviews, and literary contributions from the children in the form of essays, stories and poems.

Annual Reports date from the library's first year of operation, the 1978/79 session. The period covered is from October 1 to September 30 of each year. From 1983/84 the reports cover both the Children's Centre and the Library. Christmas cards designed by Isaac Ohene, portraying the Children's Centre building and an excursion to Orba market, were produced in 1987.

A brochure on the Children's Centre Library, designed by Ada Udechukwu and printed gratis by SNAAP Press, Enugu was published in 1996.

THE FUTURE – CHILDREN'S CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Children's Centre looks back with pleasure on the past 25 years of service to children and youth. On this Silver Jubilee it also looks forward to the next quarter century. While much has been accomplished, much still remains to be done. The services already established, like the library and activity programmes, need to be maintained and expanded. Other areas, like the Psycho-Educational Testing Service for children and youth with special needs, are just taking off. Still others await development. Some of these include:

- Playground and sports facilities, such as a toddler play area, outdoor exercise and gymnastic equipment, playing fields and courts, bicycle path, and landscaped park;
- Recreational Clubroom, where teenagers can gather to relax, discuss and interact with each other in a healthy and safe environment;
- Information technology, providing the computer experience and access to information our children need to function effectively in today's world;
- Desktop publishing of locally-based reading and learning materials, a project which would help primary school children develop information literacy for lifelong learning;
- Full equipping of the activity rooms with cabinets, work areas, resources and equipment for art, science, cooking and other areas.

So, while we take pleasure in past accomplishments, we also dedicate ourselves to achievement of future goals. With the help of friends we pray the Children's Centre will sustain its record of service and achieve even greater heights in the future.

UWA Presidents (from the beginning of Children's Centre)

Juliet Okonkwo, 1976-1977
 Maria Chukwumah, 1977-1987
 Ebele Maduewesi, 1987-1990
 Rose Egbuonu, 1990-1993
 Julie Okpala, 1993-1995

Jo Okereke, 1995-1997
 Uche Agwagah, 1997-2001
 Wilhelmina Kalu, 2001-2002
 Nwanneka Nwala, 2002—

Children's Centre Committee (1978-2003)



*L - R P. Chineme, M.E. Chijioke, P. Maduka, T. Emezi, W. Kalu, V. Dike,
 O. Amucheazi, T. Hoque, E. Maduewesi, by old library - 1985*

Wilhelmina Kalu
 Virginia Dike
 Ogo Amucheazi
 Gloria Ofo
 Thelma Obah
 Cynthia Obinabo
 P. Mital
 U. Agarwal
 Terri Emezi
 Joan Ezeilo
 Julie Nduanya
 Edith Ihekweazu
 Maria Nwaegbe
 Sybil Agogbua
 Mary Ellen Chijioke
 Ebele Maduewesi
 Julie Okpala
 Nancy Ohuche
 Peris Maduka
 Anne Osuji
 Philippa Chineme
 Tanveer Hoque
 Ego Uche-Okeke
 Niki Shiner
 Gianna Ludzuweit
 Judy Osuala
 Nancy Smith
 Janet Ndukwe
 Ngozi Igwegbe
 Elisabeth Odenigbo
 Kodili Ezeike
 Grace Anyanwu
 Nancy Achebe
 Chiazio Igboeli
 Joy Nwamarah
 Lesley Onuora
 Edem Ikoku



L-R behind: J. Alumanah, G. Anyanwu, J. Okereke, B. Ukaegbu, In front- J. Ndukwe, L. Onuora, W. Kalu, V. Dike, T. Emezi, 1992

Theresa Ikeme
Sylvia Uhiara
Bibiana Ukaegbu
Jo Alumanah
Thekla Ijeoma
Jo Okereke
Ada Udechukwu
Victoria Onu
Thessy Ofoegbu
Patience Onokala
Julie Ibiam
Fidelia Asiegbu
Uche Agwagah
Chinwe Ezeani
Alice Okore
Oby Ikeme
Theresa Mbakanma
Nwanneka Nwala
Schola Inyama
Uju Umoh
Azuka Obidoa
Nneka Onwubiko
Ngozi Osadebe
Ifeoma Echezona
Charity Okide



L-R behind: N. Onyegegbu, J. Ibiam, N Onwubiko, I. Echezona, C. Ezeani, S. Inyama, F. Asiegbu. In front- J. Alumanah, A. Okore, T. Emezi, V. Dike, M. Nwaegbe, G. Anyanwu, J. Osuala, 2003.

Children's Centre Staff

We would like to acknowledge the devoted service of the University staff assigned to the Children's Centre: Rose Asogwa, our cleaner/attendant; driver Greg Nwodo; typists Lewechi Onyeabor (1988-1997) and the late Vincent Okpe (1997-1998); and librarian Ferdinand Nwankwo (1997-2000).



Children's Centre Staff – G. Nwodo; R. Asogwa and L. Onyeabor with UWA President J. Okpala, 1993

Honour Roll of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Members

1989	Pius Udo	1994	Toyin Oyelade	1997	Funke Adeyemi
1990	Festus Ikoh	1994	Henry Olawale	1998	Aminu Adamu
1991	Yusuf Abdulazeez	1995	Cosmos Okpalaebube	1999	Regina Ike
1992	Helen Ama	1995	Comfort Ogban-Iyam	2000	Lawretta Akaeze
1993	Seyi Salami	1995	Sunday Emene	2002	Valentine Ahunanya
1993	Meg Fadehan	1996	Cecilia Okeke		



Pius Udo



Seyi Salami (L), Meg Fadehan (R) with J. Okpala



Lawretta Akaeze (2nd L) with W. Kalu, T. Emezi, and O. Ikeme



A Final Word from the Children

At first glance, the Children's Centre looks very much like any other building on the campus. But a step inside will reveal the world which lies within its walls, a world of miracles, a world of magic, a world where children's dreams become reality, a world of enchantment, a world of exploration, a world of fulfillment.

I remember the excitement with which we would run to the Centre every evening after school hours. Neither rain nor sunshine could deter us from our mission. The influence of the Centre on the youth of the campus and its environs is immeasurable.

For many of us, the Children's Centre Library will always be fondly remembered as a place where we developed our thirst for knowledge. It provided answers to satisfy the young curious mind, information to expand the intellect, picture books and novels for reading pleasure.

But the Children's Centre is more than a place for the exchange of books. It is a place for recreation, a place for interaction, a place where love, friendship and harmony are encouraged and fostered through the vacation programmes. It is a place you come into as a child and feel you belong.

Wishing the Children's Centre a Happy Silver Jubilee Celebration!

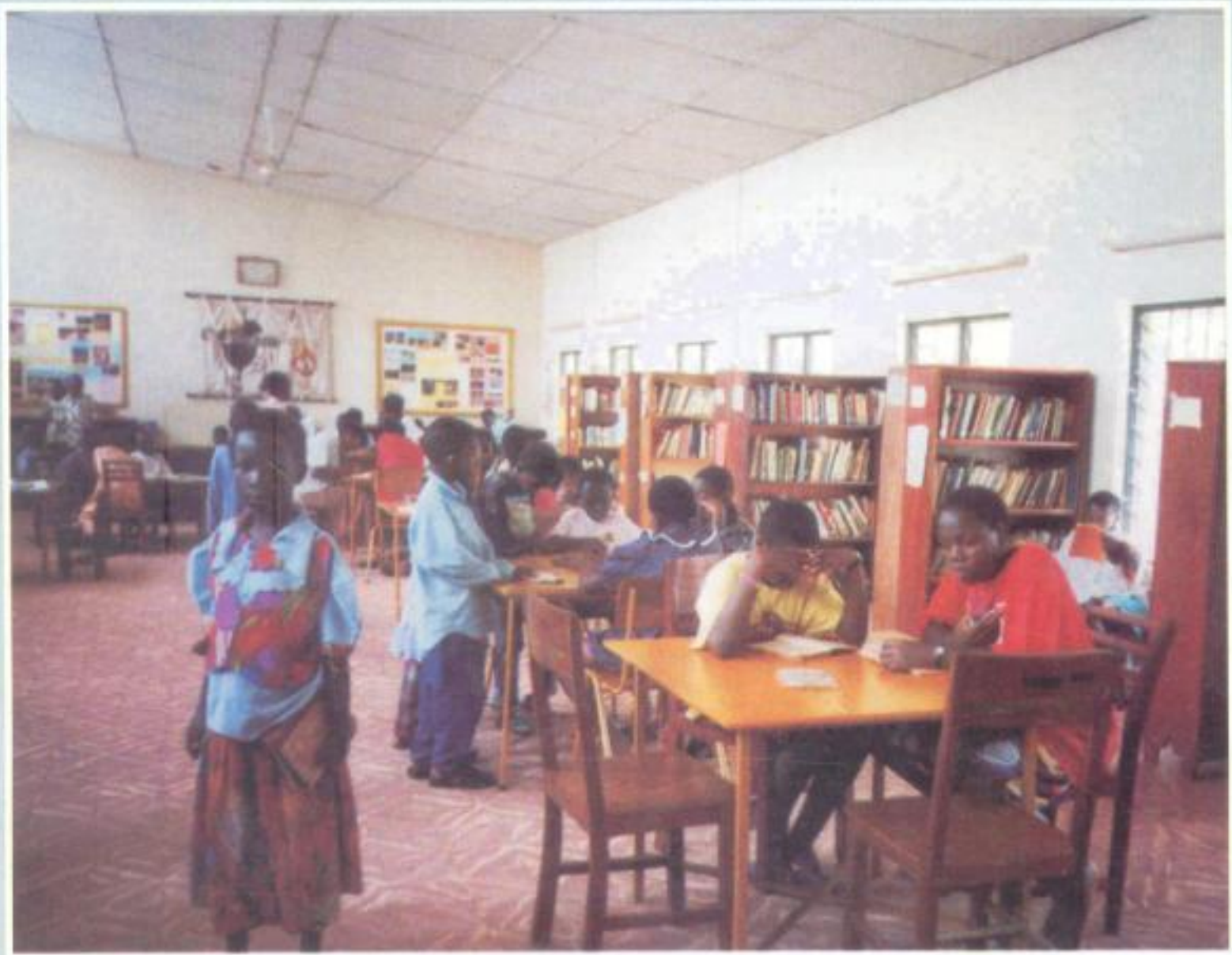
Anyueru Okore

Department of Political Science



Children's Centre Donors

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Children's Centre Library

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